

**Amendments to the Claims:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

**Listing of Claims:**

1. (currently amended) A polymorphic database comprising:  
an application program; and  
data accessible by the application program and on which the application program is  
operative, wherein the data comprises:  
a records data set (RDS) containing at least ~~one~~ two RDS ~~entry having entries,~~  
each of said at least two RDS entries comprising data fields configured for representing  
data, a unique record identifier, and a field configured for storing the unique record  
identifier of each other RDS entry with which each respective RDS entry is associated;  
and  
a categories data set (CDS) containing at least one CDS entry configured for  
being associated with the at least one RDS entry and having at least one data type field  
sufficient to describe the type of data contained by the at least one associated RDS entry.
2. (original) The database of Claim 1 further comprising for each CDS entry a unique  
category identifier, and for each RDS entry a field for storing the unique category identifier of  
the CDS entry with which a respective RDS entry is associated.
3. (cancelled)
4. (original) The database of Claim 1 further comprising for each CDS entry a unique  
category identifier and an inheritance field configured for storing the unique category identifier  
corresponding to another CDS entry from which properties will be inherited for a respective  
CDS entry.

5. (original) The database of Claim 1 further comprising for each CDS entry a unique category identifier and an inheritance field configured for storing the unique category identifier corresponding to another CDS entry from which properties will be cumulatively inherited for a respective CDS entry.

6. (currently amended) The database of Claim 1 further comprising:  
for each CDS entry a unique category identifier;  
for each CDS entry a field configured for storing the unique category identifier of each other CDS entry with which each respective CDS entry is associated;  
~~for each RDS entry a unique record identifier; and~~  
for each RDS entry a RECORD\_CATEGORY\_ID field configured for storing the unique category identifier corresponding to the RDS entry, and a PEERS field for storing the unique record identifier of each other RDS entry which corresponds to each respective CDS entry associated with the unique category identifier stored in the RECORD\_CATEGORY\_ID field.

7. (currently amended) The database of Claim 1 further comprising:  
for each CDS entry a unique category identifier;  
for each CDS entry a field configured for storing the unique category identifier of each other CDS entry with which each respective CDS entry is associated;  
~~for each RDS entry a unique record identifier;~~  
for each RDS entry a RECORD\_CATEGORY\_ID field configured for storing the unique category identifier corresponding to the RDS entry, and a PEERS field for storing the unique record identifier of each other RDS entry which corresponds to each respective CDS entry associated with the unique category identifier stored in the RECORD\_CATEGORY\_ID field;  
and

for each CDS entry a field configured for storing a STAND-ALONE flag indicating whether a PEER field must be available in a first RDS entry to store the unique record identifier of a second RDS entry before said second RDS entry may be entered into the RDS.

8. (currently amended) The database of Claim 1 further comprising

for each CDS entry a unique category identifier;  
for each CDS entry a field configured for storing the unique category identifier of each other CDS entry with which each respective CDS entry is associated;  
~~for each RDS entry a unique record identifier;~~  
for each RDS entry a RECORD\_CATEGORY\_ID field configured for storing the unique category identifier corresponding to the RDS entry, and a PEERS field for storing the unique record identifier of each other RDS entry which corresponds to each respective CDS entry associated with the unique category identifier stored in the RECORD\_CATEGORY\_ID field;  
and  
for each CDS entry a field configured for storing a REUSABLE flag indicating whether a new other RDS entry should be created and referenced in the PEERS field, or an existing other RDS entry may be referenced in the PEERS field if the value and meaning of the existing other RDS entry is substantively identical to the value of the new other RDS entry that would otherwise have been created.

9. (currently amended) A method for defining data/type associations, the method comprising the steps of:

defining an application program; and  
defining data accessible by the application program and on which the application program is operative, wherein the data comprises:

a records data set (RDS) containing at least ~~one~~ two ~~RDS entry having entries,~~  
each of said at least two RDS entries comprising data fields configured for representing data, a unique record identifier, and a field configured for storing the unique record identifier of each other RDS entry with which each respective RDS entry is associated;  
and

a categories data set (CDS) containing at least one CDS entry configured for being associated with the at least one RDS entry and having at least one data type field sufficient to describe the type of data contained by the at least one associated RDS entry.

10. (original) The method of Claim 9 further comprising the steps of defining for each CDS entry a unique category identifier, and defining for each RDS entry a field for storing the unique category identifier of the CDS entry with which a respective RDS entry is associated.

11. (Cancelled)

12. (original) The method of Claim 9 further comprising the step of defining for each CDS entry a unique category identifier and an inheritance field configured for storing the unique category identifier corresponding to another CDS entry from which properties will be inherited for a respective CDS entry.

13. (original) The method of Claim 9 further comprising the step of defining for each CDS entry a unique category identifier and an inheritance field configured for storing the unique category identifier corresponding to another CDS entry from which properties will be cumulatively inherited for a respective CDS entry.

14. (currently amended) The method of Claim 9 further comprising the steps of:  
defining for each CDS entry a unique category identifier;  
defining for each CDS entry a field configured for storing the unique category identifier of each other CDS entry with which each respective CDS entry is associated;  
~~defining for each RDS entry a unique record identifier; and~~  
defining for each RDS entry a RECORD\_CATEGORY\_ID field configured for storing the unique category identifier corresponding to the RDS entry, and a PEERS field for storing the unique record identifier of each other RDS entry which corresponds to each respective CDS entry associated with the unique category identifier stored in the RECORD\_CATEGORY\_ID field.

15. (currently amended) The method of Claim 9 further comprising the steps of:  
defining for each CDS entry a unique category identifier;

defining for each CDS entry a field configured for storing the unique category identifier of each other CDS entry with which each respective CDS entry is associated;

~~defining for each RDS entry a unique record identifier;~~

defining for each RDS entry a RECORD\_CATEGORY\_ID field configured for storing the unique category identifier corresponding to the RDS entry, and a PEERS field for storing the unique record identifier of each other RDS entry which corresponds to each respective CDS entry associated with the unique category identifier stored in the RECORD\_CATEGORY\_ID field; and

defining for each CDS entry a field configured for storing a STAND-ALONE flag indicating whether a PEER field must be available in a first RDS entry to store the unique record identifier of a second RDS entry before said second RDS entry may be entered into the RDS.

16. (currently amended) The method of Claim 9 further comprising

defining for each CDS entry a unique category identifier;

defining for each CDS entry a field configured for storing the unique category identifier of each other CDS entry with which each respective CDS entry is associated;

~~defining for each RDS entry a unique record identifier;~~

defining for each RDS entry a RECORD\_CATEGORY\_ID field configured for storing the unique category identifier corresponding to the RDS entry, and a PEERS field for storing the unique record identifier of each other RDS entry which corresponds to each respective CDS entry associated with the unique category identifier stored in the RECORD\_CATEGORY\_ID field; and

defining for each CDS entry a field configured for storing a REUSABLE flag indicating whether a new other RDS entry should be created and referenced in the PEERS field, or an existing other RDS entry may be referenced in the PEERS field if the value and meaning of the existing other RDS entry is substantively identical to the value of the new other RDS entry that would otherwise have been created.